

Message Text

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SUBJECT: UN ADMINISTRATION - COMMITTEE ON CONFERENCES - INFORMAL
MEETINGS

1. COMMITTEE ON CONFERENCE DISCUSSED PROBLEM OF SERVICING INFORMAL MEETINGS OF OFFICIAL BODIES AND MEETINGS OF UNOFFICIAL BODIES SUCH AS REGIONAL GROUPS. IN DISCUSSION, THERE WAS WIDE AGREEMENT THAT ORMAL MEETINGS OF OFFICIAL BODIES WHICH SUBSTITUTE FOR OFFICIAL MEETINGS HAVE CLEAR ADVANTAGES OF NOT REQUIRING WRITTEN RECORDS AND CONTRIBUTES TO EFFECTIVE CONDUCT OF BUSINESS. AS FOR INFORMAL MEETINGS OF REGIONAL BODIES AND SIMILAR GROUPS, SECRETARIAT APPEARED TO BE SEEKING "PROVISION" IN CONFERENCE PLANNING AND PRESUMABLY IN BUDGETING FOR SUCH SERVICES. COMMITTEE, HOWEVER, DECIDED THAT NO ADDITIONAL RESOURCES WERE CONSIDERED NECESSARY FOR SERVICING OF SUCH INFORMAL MEETINGS.

2. COMMITTEE AGREED ON FOLLOWING LANGUAGE TO BE INCORPORATED INTO ITS REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON INFORMAL MEETINGS:

INFORMAL MEETINGS

THE COMMITTEE ON CONFERENCES CONSIDERED SEPARATELY QUESTIONS RLATING TO INFORMAL MEETINGS OF OFFICIAL BODIES AND MEETING OF UNOFFICIAL BODIES, SUCH AS REGIONAL GROUPS, FOR BOTH OF WHICH THE DEPARTMENT OF CONFERENCE SERVICES IS ASKED TO PROVIDE INTERPRETATION
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AND PHYSICAL FACILITIES.

THE HAS HITHERTO BEEN NO SPECIFIC LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY FOR THE SERVICING OF INFORMAL MEETINGS - OTHER THAN THE GENERAL DUTY OF THE SECRETARIAT TO AFFORD ALL POSSIBLE ASSISTANCE TO MEMBER STATES. IT IS RELEVANT, HOWEVER, THAT PART OF THE JUSTIFICATION FOR A REQUEST FOR ONE ADDITIONAL TEAM OF INTERPRETERS IN THE BUDGET ESTIMATES FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1969 (A/7205) WAS THAT THE NUMBER OF REQUEST TO PROVIDE INTERPRETATION SERVICES TO MEETINGS OF REGIONAL GROUPS OUTSIDE THE REGULAR MEETINGS PROGRAMME HAD INCREASED CONSIDERABLY. THAT REQUEST WAS APPROVED, BUT, AS THE INCREASE IN MEETINGS OF REGIONAL GROUPS HAD NOT BEEN THE SOLE REASON FOR IT, THE FACT OF THIS APPROVAL DID CHANGE SUBSTANTIALLY THE BASIC APPROACH THAT INFORMAL MEETINGS SHOULD BE SERVICED ON THE BASIS OF AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES.

THE COMMITTEE,

- RECOMMENDS THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO NOTE WITH APPROVAL, THE TREND TOWARDS HOLDING AS MANY MEETINGS OF CERTAIN UNITED NATIONS BODIES AS PRACTICABLE INFORMALLY. TO THE EXTENT THAT SUCH A TREND REDUCES REQUIREMENTS FOR WRITTEN RECORDS, IT REPRESENTS A CONTRIBUTION TO ECONOMY. TO THE EXTENT THAT THE TREND FOSTERS A BETTER CLIMATE FOR NEGOTIATION, IT REPRESENTS A CONTRIBUTION TO THE EFFECTIVE CONDUCT OF BUSINESS.

- HAS CONSIDERED THE QUESTION OF INFORMAL MEETINGS OF REGIONAL AND SIMILAR GROUPS. IT BELIEVES THAT THESE MEETINGS ARE A USEFUL ELEMENT IN THE CONDUCT OF BUSINESS AND THAT PROVISION OF THE SHOULD BE MADE IN SOME REASONABLE MANNER. IT NOTES THAT THE LEVELS AND TIMING OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR SUCH MEETINGS ARE DIFFICULT TO PREDICT AND THAT NO MACHINERY IS READILY AVAILABLE TO SORT OUT CONFLICTING REQUESTS. THE COMMITTEE ALSO NOTES THAT THE SECRETARIAT HAS PROVIDED SERVICES (ROOMS AND INTERPRETATION) FOR THESE MEETINGS ON AN "AS AVAILABLE" BASIS WHICH DURING BUSY PERIODS MAY NOT BE ADEQUATE. THE COMMITTEE DISCUSSED SEVERAL POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS TO THIS PROBLEM, BUT CONCLUDED THAT AT THIS TIME NO ADDITIONAL RESOURCES WERE CONSIDERED NECESSARY FOR SERVICING INFORMAL MEETINGS.

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